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## THE SCARLET HAND; OR, The Orphan Heiress of Fifth Avenue.

A STORY OF  
NEW YORK HEARTHS AND NEW YORK HOMES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

Author of "The Ace of Spades," "The Witches of New York," Etc.

### CHAPTER XIV.

LOVE AND FEAR.

BLANCHE MAYBURY sat in the parlor of the Strathroy mansion. 'Twas early evening. The gas had just been lighted.

Blanche sat by the window looking listlessly out upon the darkness of the avenue, which was lit up here and there by the lights flashing from the windows of the brown-stone palaces.

It was the evening of the day that she had been called upon Mr. Chubbet, her guardian, and made known to him her strange determination respecting Allyne Strathroy.

Blanche did not feel in a pleasant mood.

It was a terrible struggle to tear from her heart the image of the man that had once been enshrined there; but she felt that she did not love him, and though it cost her many a bitter pang, yet she had resolved to do what she believed to be her duty.

Gloomy were her thoughts as she gazed out on the broad street before her. She expected a bitter—an unpleasant interview with Allyne, when he should learn the truth, and she was nervously herself to meet the trial.

"Musing alone," Blanche said to a deep voice at her side. Started for a moment, for she had not heard any one enter the parlor, she turned her head and beheld Allyne Strathroy standing by her side.

There was a look upon the face of the man who had once been so dear to her that she did not like. It was a threatening look.

She had never seen Allyne Strathroy look so before. Her heart told her that the interview that she so dreaded was a hand, and the strange expression upon Allyne's face told her also that it would be far from being a pleasant one.

"I did not hear you come in," she said, looking up in his face.

"Am I less welcome on that account?" he asked, leaning on the back of the cushioned arm-chair in which she sat, and looking down into her face with a gleam in his eyes that chilled her to the heart, although his glance was one of fire.

"No, of course not," she replied, answering the odd question that he had asked.

Blanche, what were you thinking of when I entered the room?" he said.

"Why—of—a great many things," she replied, with hesitation. "Why do you ask?"

"Because, from the expression upon your face when I came in, I should judge that your thoughts were not pleasant ones."

Blanche could not understand the strange feeling that came over her now in Allyne Strathroy's presence. His voice—the voice whose rich tones were once so pleasant to her ear—now filled her soul with a strange apprehension of danger. She could assign no reason for this change. She could only feel it, without being able to explain why or wherefore.

"How strangely you speak, Allyne," she said, after a few minutes of silence, feeling that she should say something.

"I do not speak as strangely as you act, Blanche," he replied.

The painful interview was coming, and yet now that she could not avoid it, her heart sunk within her and she would have given almost any thing to escape, and this, too, after bravely making up her mind to encounter it.

"Blanche," he continued, finding that she did not reply, "I have seen Mr. Chubbet, your guardian. He told me the particulars of an interview between you and himself this morning. I would not have believed such an interview could have taken place had I not his word for it. Blanche, what have I ever done to you that you should break your faith with me?" The tone of Allyne was deep and strong, but more full of angry passion than of sorrowful emotion.

"Nothing." The word came slowly from the lips of the fair girl, who bent her head and did not, seemingly, dare to encounter the look of the young man.

"Ah, nothing," he repeated; "and for nothing you break your word! You plunge me down into utter misery. You take away from me all that makes life joyful—yourself, and all for—nothing." Bitter indeed was his tone.

"Blanche, I thought better of you. I did not think that you would treat me this way. If you could give me a reason for this sudden change, I should not blame you so much. But you have no reason."

"Yes, yes, I have!" she answered, feeling that his words were unjust.

"And what is that reason?" he demanded, earnestly looking into her face, which now was uplifted to meet his eyes.

"I do not love you!" she answered firmly.

"You have never loved me," he cried, in heat.

"Allyne, you do not speak the truth," she exclaimed, all the woman in her nature roused by his words. "You know that I have loved you, and if I love you no longer, it is your fault and not mine."

"What do you mean?" asked the young man, a frown clouding up his brow.

"That you have changed," replied the girl, firmly. "You are not the Allyne that I gave my love to. You have deceived me, and now that I have discovered the truth, which is best—to confess it frankly as I have confessed, or to deceive you with a lie?" To say that I love you with my lips, when in my heart, I fear you!"

"You fear me?" said Allyne, apparently astounded by her words. "What have I ever done that you should fear me?"

"I can not tell," said Blanche, in despair; "but that is why I am so miserable. My heart tells me that I fear you, and yet I can not give a reason for it."

"This is but a girlish fancy!" exclaimed Strathroy.

"No, no, Allyne, it is not!" cried Blanche, while, in spite of her efforts, the tears came slowly into her eyes. "Oh, Allyne, do not blame me for acting as I have, rather pity me; for, oh! you can not guess how wretched this knowledge has made me. Only one little week ago, I looked forward to the day when I should call you husband, with ea-

"But, Allyne, you can not mean—" cried Blanche, in wonder.

"To hold you to your promise? But I do, though. I will not let you make wretched both your own life and mine by this thoughtless act," replied Allyne.

"And you are willing to marry a woman who tells you that she can not love you?" questioned Blanche, a red flush sweeping over her face.

"Yes," said Allyne, firmly.

"Who tells you that she fears you almost as she fears a serpent?"

"Yes," again repeated Strathroy.

"Allyne Strathroy, you have changed indeed," Blanche could hardly believe what she had heard.

"Yes, I have changed, and you are the cause of that change. Blanche, I will never resign you."

"Allyne, I never expected to hear you speak like this. You are not the Allyne I loved, and I will never be your wife of my own free will." Let me pass."

Then, with a queenly step, she left the room. Allyne did not offer to detain her.

"Blanche, you can not escape me," he said, fiercely, sinking into a chair with an angry glare in his dark eyes.

### CHAPTER XV.

ON THE TRAIL.

"SHE is fully in my power," mused Allyne, as he took the seat by the window wherein Blanche had sat. "How can she escape me?" The five thousand dollars will make old Chubbet do my will. I read his character at the first glance—the infernal old scoundrel. If he can not persuade or force Blanche to become my wife, some other means must be used. And what other means can be used?" For a moment Allyne pondered over the question. "I have it!" he exclaimed, at last. "I can find a minister somewhere, who, for a good round sum, will not be particular whether the young lady says 'yes' or 'no' when we stand up before him. I will make the girl mine if I am sure of sinking to hell's fires the moment afterward."

Then Allyne thought over the interview that had taken place between Blanche and himself.

"There seems to be a special Providence in this strange dislike that the girl has taken to me," he muttered; "she can not understand the reason, but I can, though, and I do not wonder at it. Some persons laugh at presentations; I do not. I am convinced that there is something within our natures—some mysterious and unknown power, that the eye of science has not yet reached or even guessed at—that warns us of coming evil. This girl, hates me, whom she used to love, warned by that mysterious power. I hate this man—this outcast wretch, whose name even I do not know—but whom I feel—warned by this same power—is either destined to kill me or I him. Once already I have failed. And now how can I discover him, discover where he has his den, that again I may seek and strike him—again stain my hand scarlet in blood?"

A ring of the door-bell interrupted Allyne's meditations. Glancing through the window, which commanded a view of the front steps, he saw a tall figure dressed in black standing there. The figure was not familiar to the young man.

"What does he want, I wonder?" he said to himself.

A few moments after one of the servants, who had answered the bell, came into the room.

"What is it, Williams?" Allyne asked.

"It's an old gentleman, sir—who says he used to know your father—would like to see you, if you are disengaged," said the servant.

"Show him in here; I'll see him."

Allyne Strathroy had a strange curiosity respecting the father that had so mysterious

disappeared twenty-two years before.

The servant conducted the gentleman into the parlor.

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daunt, the outcast actor—the man that he feared so much.

"At last I know him!" Allyne muttered. "If he escapes me now, it is because it is fated that I shall perish by his hand, and not he by mine."

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE SLASHER MAKES A MORNING CALL.

It was the morning after the night when Allyne Strathroy had made the discovery that Edmund Mordaunt was the name of the vagabond player that he feared so much, and that apparently without any reason, that an omnibus rolling up Madison avenue stopped at Twenty-third street and deposited Mr. John Duke, the notorious Slasher, upon the curbstone.

The Slasher was habited in his best attire; in fact, he looked quite the gentleman, excepting that the checks on his trowsers were a little too large, and the dogs' heads on his velvet vest a little too flashy. To speak plainly, Duke's "get-up" came under the head of "cloud." Not that the Slasher had any such idea, for he glanced at himself with an air of complacency that showed plainly that he was perfectly satisfied with his personal appearance.

"I rayther think this is the sort of thing," he said, as he walked slowly down the street, heading toward Fifth avenue. "Blest if I don't look like a blood 'all over. This rig is just stummin'. I 'spect the young sport will be rayther astonished at a call from John Duke, Esquire, as he don't happen to have the pleasure of my acquaintance. But, I think that before I've been in his shanty long, well be thick as thieves."

As the reader has doubtless surmised from the musings of the Slasher, that worthy was on his way to pay a morning call to Allyne Strathroy.

The Slasher turned into Fifth avenue, and as he did so, he took from his pocket the letter that the man who had been so mysteriously murdered—James Kidd—had written to Allyne Strathroy, and which he, the Slasher, had picked up from beneath the table in the room of the murdered man, on the morning when he had discovered the body.

The Slasher read the address on the envelop. Then he glanced at the number upon the house by which he stood. "It's on the other side of the street, and I guess on the next block," he muttered. "I might as well cross over now." So over the street went the Slasher.

"Let me see," he mused, as he walked along. "Let me fix the slate"—prepare the programme. This letter that I found in the room is pretty good proof that this Allyne Strathroy was there on the night of the murder. S'pose I make a bold dash at it, an' swear to him that I saw him go into the house? How's that for high?" and the Slasher chuckled over the idea. "If he's the man that give Jimmy Kidd that wipe with the long knife, why, when I make the charge, he'll be apt to knuckle an' see me for to hold my tongue. If he ain't the man, and is innocent of the murder, why he'll deny it, an' I've made a mistake, that's all. But I feel pretty sure he is the man. But what did he want to kill Jimmy for? That's what I can't understand. There's a mystery about it."

By the time that Duke had arrived at this conclusion, he had reached the house of Allyne Strathroy. His eyes fell upon the door-plate bearing the young man's name.

"Here's my bird," he said, with a chuckle.

As he ascended the steps and gave the bell a lusty pull, "Now I'll try for to see if I can't put some salt on his tail. If he's my man I'll let him down easy; 'bout two thousand a year; that will be a tidy salary. I couldn't steal much more nor that I was to run for an office an' git elected."

Then the door opening, cut short Duke's visitor to his library.

They entered and Allyne closed the door. "Now, sir, your business?" Allyne asked.

The servant with the idea that he was a swell of the first water.

"Yes," said the servant, shortly, not relishing the familiar style of the address.

"Well, just you trot off an' tell him that a gent wishes to see him on particular business," said Duke, icily.

"Are you the gent?" asked the servant, superciliously.

"You can go your pie on that, young feller," said the Slasher, with a wink.

"Your card, sir," and the servant extended his hand.

"My what?" asked the Slasher, beginning to a little wrath.

"Your card, of course—your name," explained the servant, with an air of dignity.

"What do you want my name for?" demanded the Slasher, who was not over-patient by nature, and whose choler was rising at this sort of treatment.

"I do not understand the necessity of all this precaution, sir," said Strathroy, impatiently.

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"You just try that on ag'in an' I'll hit you right in the snoot," said the Slasher, doubling up his huge fist, and advancing upon the terrified servant.

"What is the matter, Williams?" said Allyne Strathroy, speaking from the head of the stairs, whither he had been attracted by the noise in the entry.

As the sound of Allyne's voice fell upon the ears of the Slasher, he started slightly and a puzzled expression came over his face.

"Why, I've met this chap, somewhere," he muttered, "an' I've heard that voice before."

"It's a man insists upon seeing you, sir, and he won't give his name," said the servant, retreating out of the reach of the Slasher's muscular arm.

"Say a gent, you foo-foo you!" growled the Slasher, in an undertone. The servant retreated still further along the entry.

"To see me," said Allyne, beginning to descend the stairs. Half-way down he saw the Slasher's face, and for a moment paused on the stairway, while a strange, peculiar wrinkle came between his eyes. Then again he slowly descended the stairs.

The Slasher, looking up, saw the face of the young man.

"Blest if I ain't seen him somewhere, too," the rough muttered.

"Do you wish to see me, sir?" asked Allyne, speaking in quite a low and apparently guarded tone.

"Yes, if you are Mr. Allyne Strathroy," said the Slasher, who was sorely puzzled, for when he heard the young man speak at the head of the stairs, he could have sworn that he knew the voice; but now, the voice seemed utterly strange to him. But the face still was familiar. The Slasher knew that somewhere, before, he had seen a face that looked like the face of the young man.

"And who is going to put me there?" "I am."

"Oh, you are!" And then again Allyne favored the rough with a look which the latter didn't like at all.

"You'll find out if I'm drunk or crazy when you're behind the prison-bars, my young blood," cried the Slasher, in a rage.

"Yes, I am," returned the Slasher, doggedly; "that is, I will unless you are reasonable an' do what's right."

"Do what is right?" said the young man, repeating the words as if unable to guess their meaning.

"Yes, I am," said the Slasher; "I don't bear you any malice 'bout the affair, though Jimmy was an old pard' of mine."

"Jimmy?"

"Yes; the man you killed—stabbed to the heart."

"I beg your pardon. Allow me to correct you in one little particular: not, 'the man that I killed,' but the man that *you say* I killed," said Allyne, quietly.

"Well, I kin prove it, too!" exclaimed the Slasher, defiantly.

"Oh, you can?"

"Yes, unless you 'come down.'"

"That is, you mean unless I pay you to keep silence?" said Allyne.

"Yes, that's just what I mean," replied the Slasher.

"It is a case of blackmail, then?"

"You kin call it what you like," said the rough, sullenly; "but unless you 'come down with the rocks, I goes straight from here to the nearest police justice, and I gets out a warrant for your arrest."

"Oh, you do?"

"Yes, I do!" cried Duke, enraged at the cool tone of the man whom he had confidently expected would go down on his knees before him and beg for mercy when he charged him with his crime.

"To get out a warrant it is necessary to be able to swear to something. Now, what can you swear to, to connect me with this murder that you speak of?" asked Allyne, coolly.

"Do you see this letter?" and Duke held up the letter that he had found under the table, and which we have spoken of before.

"Yes, I see it," said Allyne, without betraying any emotion.

"This letter was written by James Kidd to Allyne Strathroy—you see the address?"

"And how comes that letter in your hands?" sternly asked Allyne.

The Slasher looked at him for a moment in blank amazement.

"Well, you are a cool hand," he said, at length. "How does it come in my hands?"

"I'll tell you." The Slasher felt that he was about to run the chase to earth. "This letter is an appointment for you to come to No. 52 Baxter street on a certain night. You went to the house and you dropped this letter there. I found it under the table the next morning, at the same time that I discovered the dead body of Kidd, the man killed by you. This letter proves that you were in the house the night that he was murdered. Taint much evidence I know, but I guess it's enough to start on a trial will probably fetch out the reason why you did kill him."

"You have no proof that Allyne Strathroy ever received that letter," said Allyne, thoughtfully.

"There's no tellin'. I alfers like to be on the safe side. Why, I knowed a feller as went up the river for five years 'cos he happened to speak trife loud in an' oys."

"What do you want my name for?" demanded the Slasher, who was not over-patient by nature, and whose choler was rising at this sort of treatment.

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The stranger walked in at once, and seated himself on one of the rude chairs of the cabin.

"Thank you kindly," he said. "I promised Tom to call and see you. He sent several messages by me to Pittsburgh—among them one to you—and here I am. I only arrived two hours since."

"May God bless you, sir, for your kindness! And was Tom well, sir? Was he still mindful of old Ben? And where was he, sir, when he gave you the message for me?"

The stranger started, but, after a moment's hesitation, replied:

"Tom was well, and always spoke of you with the warmest affection. When I saw him, some months ago, he was far away from this! But, Tom has been fortunate, since he was here."

"Fortunate? And how, sir? I know he had good luck in some things, but to what do you refer?"

"He has had a great deal of money left him," replied the stranger, quietly, glancing at the old man.

"I'm glad, indeed, to hear it, sir!" said Ben, promptly; "for, if ever man deserved the smiles of heaven, Tom Worth was that man! To tell you the truth, Mr. Morton," and he drew his chair confidentially toward the richly-clad gentleman, "there was something strange about Tom—that boy of mine. He was wonderful book-learned, sir, and though he had thews of steel and muscles of iron, and a fist that could shiver an inch-thick oak plank, yet that hand, though he worked in the mine, was always so white, so fine, so like a gentleman's, sir, that I often thought, though I didn't say it, that Tom was not exactly what he seemed to be. And, then, Mr. Morton, Tom was so gentle, so respectful, sir, to the women. And I tell you, sir, that such a man is a true man, and one as don't forget he has had a mother, sir!"

The stranger listened intently, his eyes fixed on the old man's face—those eyes wet still.

"You speak words of wisdom, my friend," he said, in a low voice, one deeply enthusiastic from emotion, "and you are right—such men are true men."

"Yes, Mr. Morton; and Tom Worth was one of them! And then, too, in a rough-and-tumble, my stars, sir! he was a perfect lion, and—But do you know his story, sir? He had a little trouble hereabouts!"

The old man spoke cautiously.

"Yes," replied the stranger; "I know Tom Worth's story, every word, and I know, too, that Tom was innocent."

"Innocent? Of course he was! And he would be a brave man, as I have said more than once, who would contradict me! Though—though—truth be told, for a long time, Tom himself would not say whether or not he was."

"Perhaps he had his reasons," suggested Mr. Morton, softly.

"Of course, sir, of course!" was the reply. "That was Tom! Reasons for every thing, and good ones! God be thanked that I have heard from him again!"

A silence of some minutes ensued, the stranger bending his head in thought, old Ben sitting with his eyes half closed, a pleasant smile spreading over his countenance, as his mind, doubtless, was traveling back over the past. The old man was thinking of Tom Worth, and the other was thinking of—what?

Suddenly the old man broke the silence by saying:

"You have brought me news, Mr. Morton—good, glorious news for me, and the same for another!" and he glanced familiarly at the stranger, as if courting a confidence.

Mr. Morton started; his face flushed slightly, and his mustached lip trembled.

But he asked, quietly:

"What do you mean, Mr. Walford?"

"Why, sir, there can be no harm in telling you, for you are Tom's friend. Why, sir, Tom was a handsome lad, and he had, truth be told, a wondrous way with the women. And, sir—why, Tom was in love, and in love with a rich man's daughter."

The old man paused.

Mr. Morton drew still nearer to the miner, his gaze fixed upon him earnestly, expectantly.

"Well, Mr. Walford?"

"And, sir, the girl—God bless her for a noble woman—loved Tom more than any plain, blunt words of mine can tell you, sir. And she would have married Tom in spite of every thing had, my boy stayed; but, poor thing—"

Again the old man paused.

Mr. Morton was now showing signs of excitement. He placed his hand upon the old man's arm, and said, in a deep whisper:

"Yes, yes, Mr. Walford; what of this poor girl, who loved the humble Tom Worth of those days?"

"Why, sir, poor thing, she has almost grieved herself to death after him. In spite of all I could say and swear to her, she believes Tom is dead—was drowned, sir. Why—would you believe it—she has been wearing black for Tom for these two years past! Don't that show love, sir? Again I say, may God bless that woman!"

"Amen!" echoed Mr. Morton, and a tear dimmed his eye; nor did the turning of his head conceal his emotion from old Ben.

"And now, sir, the other part of your good news," said the miner, softly, "is that I can tell Miss Grace positively that Tom

is not dead, and that perhaps, nay I know it, sir! that, though he is rich now, yet he is true to her still!"

"Ay, my friend! True to the death?" said the stranger, somewhat vehemently—so much so, indeed, that old Ben glanced at him quickly.

"But," continued Mr. Morton, as he saw the effect of his words, "it will not do now to tell the—this young lady of mine. We will wait; I have my reasons."

"Of course, sir, of course. And I am so glad to hear from Tom; I'd almost be willing to die without ever more seeing old England if my eyes could fall on Tom. God grant it!"

"You may see him yet, Mr. Walford; who knows?" said the stranger, quickly.

"But," he continued, as if recollecting himself, "I have with me a letter from Tom for you. Here it is," and he drew it from his pocket and handed it over.

The old man took it with an air almost reverential; fondled it for a moment in his large hands, and gazed affectionately at the superscription.

"Yes, 'tis from Tom!" he muttered; "I see his writing—so clear, so strong and fine, like printing! But, sir, my old eyes are dim; read that letter for me. I would not miss a single word for ten dollars in gold! Read it, sir, for me. If you are a friend of Tom Worth, and I believe you are, there can be no secrets in it from you. Read it, Mr. Morton; for, though your beard is white, your eyes—I know it—are younger and sharper than mine."

The stranger started at these words, and a smile flashed over his face; but, he took the letter, opened it, and spread out the sheet. As he did so, several bank-notes fell down. The stranger quietly picked them up and laid them on the table.

The old miner looked at the money, and then bowed his head.

"I will read Tom's letter if you are ready," said Mr. Morton, after a pause, in a low voice.

"Read, read on, sir," and the old man did not raise his head.

After another moment's hesitation, the stranger read, in a steady, but subdued voice, as follows:

"DEAR BEN:—

"God be thanked that I can write to you again, and tell you that I have not forgotten you! Though many long months have rolled by since we parted on the banks of the river, yet, Ben, you are dear to me still. I have undergone much since I last saw you—sighed, suffered much, but through all I have remembered you, the only true friend I ever had! I am far away now, Ben—far away from you and our dear old cabin on the hill-side where you and your 'boy' have passed so many happy, honest hours together—"

The stranger's voice wavered; old Ben's giant frame shook like an aspen leaf.

"And, Ben, it may be," resumed the stranger, reading from the letter, "that we will never more meet there. If such should be God's will, bow to it, Ben, and pray, with me, that we may meet in the bright hereafter. I have inclosed to you, Ben, notes to the value of one hundred pounds—the money of your native land—old England, so dear to you. I can afford it. Take it, Ben; it comes a free gift from one who loves you more tenderly than words can tell. Good-bye, Ben—I can not say forever; but, should it be decreed that we meet no more on earth, do your whole part as a God-fearing man to meet me in the better land. May God bless you!"

For five minutes there was a complete silence; and then, as if fearing to speak, the old miner slowly raised his tear-bedewed face.

"I'll do it, Tom! I'll do it!" he whispered, in a deep tone, as if addressing the shade of his absent friend. "Trust me, Tom, for, with God's help, I will do it—will do all, any thing to meet you again, my noble boy!"

He took the notes, pressed them silently to his lips, and placed them away in his bosom, as if they were souvenirs too sacred to place elsewhere.

The stranger's bosom heaved; his own stalwart frame shook; a pearly tear dropped down, and then another, and another, on his long white beard. He laid the open letter on the table, and, rising, turned without a word to the door.

Suddenly, however, quick as lightning, he faced the old man, and, as he raised his tall form, his chest rising and falling tumultuously, he cried aloud:

"BEN!"

One wild, startled look, a convulsive gasping, and the old man reeled and fell forward, his brawny arms, now nerveless, clutching the other passionately around the neck.

"God be praised!" was all old Ben could say, as he drew the form of the richly-clad stranger to his bosom, and held him there in a giant's grasp.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

##### BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

hurried on down the road, in the direction of the Smithfield street bridge.

When the stranger reached the foot of the road and stood on the abutment of the bridge, he paused a moment, and glanced up at the towering precipice of the coal hills. His eyes wandered about restlessly for a few seconds; but, finally, they settled on the black, cavernous opening of a mine. Just then a brawny figure stood by that far-away hole, but, in a moment more had disappeared within the black depths.

Mr. Morton sighed gently, and then, almost instantly, a proud, triumphant smile flashed over his features. But, the smile passed off, too, and a serious, determined look settled on his fine face. Seeing, however, that he was attracting considerable attention from passers-by, he hurriedly turned about, and strode on over the bridge toward the city.

Just before he reached his hotel, at the further end of the bridge, he muttered, in an abstracted manner:

"Very strange! wondrous strange! These mutations in fortune! Stranger still that these two characters should play roles in this mysterious drama! 'Tis difficult to forget past events. There's foul-play, double-dealing, rascality somewhere! It may be well to investigate the matter; something curious may be brought to light, for the man is a scoundrel, if one walks the earth!"

With these strange words Mr. Morton passed on and entered the Monongahela House—no one paying any special heed to him.

This same day, after some searching about, which he did in a carriage and very leisurely, Mr. Morton engaged an elegant suite of rooms in a private house on Penn street, and had his numerous articles of baggage sent hither from the hotel. The stranger seemed to court privacy.

The conversation which was held the night before between old Ben and his visitor, was prolonged until far into the small hours.

"Ayant le travail."

And that conversation, though carried on in a low tone, was unflagging and earnest. In the course of it, several names familiar to the readers of this story were mentioned more than once.

At last, however, when the conference was closed, the stranger unceremoniously threw himself upon Ben's bed, and was soon wrapt in profound slumber.

"Tis needless, here, to detail the conversation of that night of surprise and joy to old Ben—joy that once again he had heard from Tom Worth, his "boy."

We can not wonder, then, after keeping such late hours, however good his company, that Mr. Morton looked somewhat haggard this morning, as he hurried into his hotel.

The day passed slowly away. After having had his baggage transferred to his room in Penn street, Mr. Morton occupied the time in writing, reading, and then, in overhauling several of his trunks.

With old Ben Walford the hours had flown swiftly, merrily away. He seemed like a new man, did this old miner, and those around him in the shafts and dark galleries of the underground world, noticed his changed demeanor, and paused more than once to hearken to his bold snatches of song, which now and then rung through the pit.

Old Ben was happy.

Why should he not be? He had heard from Tom, and his "boy" had sent him a large sum of money!

And then, too, Ben had the promise of another early visit from the white-whiskered Mr. Morton, to whom it was evident the old miner had taken a wondrous liking.

Night had once more fallen upon the city and its suburbs. The raw autumn wind was blowing lustily, betokening by its chilly breath, the early coming of the winter. A racing squadron of leaden clouds was flying across the sky, and no moon or stars, save at long intervals, mirrored their silvery images in the bosom of the broad rivers hurrying by the dark city.

It was the night after the arrival of the mysterious stranger—the night after Fairleigh Somerville's induction as owner, into the princely mansion on Stockton avenue—the night after Richard Harley was led away from the lordly dwelling, lately his, to a humble home on Cedar avenue—led away by his dove-eyed, sad-faced daughter in black.

The hour was ten, and in this sober,

staid little suburb of Pittsburgh—Allegheny city—the lamp-lighters were already extinguishing the gas in the streets; for, in this exemplary borough, lone in certain localities, the citizens had long since retired for the night, and there was no need of light.

The gas lamps along the quiet, unpretending Cedar avenue had ceased to fling out their glimmer for over an hour. But, in one small, humble house on this retired street there beamed forth a light. It came from a curtainless window on the first floor of the little tenement.

Two figures, both brawny and athletic, crept cautiously along the lonely avenue. They paused once or twice to look around them, but only for a moment.

"I must—I must be satisfied!" muttered one of the men. "I can not sleep until I have found their abode."

"Yes, yes, sir; I know your feelings,

and—Ha! sh! sh! There, sir! there!"

and the other sunk his voice to a whisper, even lower than that in which they had been conversing.

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"Yes, yes, sir; I know your feelings,

and—Ha! sh! sh! There, sir! there!"



bation broke from the little crowd of people that had collected around the girl, attracted by the music.

"That's bully, sis!" ejaculated a stout, short-haired individual, a good representative of the class known as Bowery boys.

"Here's a stamp for yer," and he put a ten cent stamp into her hand. Others of the crowd followed his example.

"Say, sis, give us 'Shoo Fly, won't ye?'" said the Bowery boy, after the crowd had made their contributions.

"Yes, sir," the girl said, lowly.

Then, with her clear voice, she sang the popular negro melody, to the intense delight of the Bowery boy, who kept time with his hands to the air and joined audibly in the chorus.

"That's just high!" he exclaimed, after she had finished, and he put another ten cent stamp into her hands. The crowd again followed his example. With a low "thank you" the girl took the money and rose to depart. The crowd, seeing that the fun was over, went on their several ways, all excepting a tall, handsome fellow, elegantly dressed, who had joined the little knot of people collected around the girl just as she was singing the last refrain of the celebrated "Shoo Fly."

The moment the voice of the singer fell upon the ears of the young man he started as if he had received an electric shock.

For an instant he listened to the clear, sweet tones like one in a dream. Mechanically he passed his hand across his forehead as if to ask himself if he was not under the influence of some horrible vision.

Then he eagerly pressed nearer to her face. In the darkness, though, he could hardly distinguish her features.

"Can it be possible?" he muttered to himself in wonder, as he tried, though in vain, to see the face of the street singer.

"No, no, it can not be possible," he continued, still communing with himself; "she could not be in a position like this, and yet the voice— I would swear to it anywhere. I must and will see her face. That is the only way to satisfy my doubts."

After the little crowd had dispersed, the street singer rose to her feet.

The young man who had been so strangely agitated by the voice of the girl approached her with a bill in his hand.

"Let me contribute something," he said, giving her the bill, and endeavoring to look into her face. But, standing as she was in the gloom of the doorway, his attempt was unsuccessful.

The moment the sound of his voice fell upon her hearing she started the same as he had when he had heard her voice.

She took the bill in her outstretched hand, crumpled it up in her palm, and then, with an angry motion, threw it into his face.

Then she passed swiftly by him and walked—almost ran—down the street.

The young man stood like one bewildered for a moment.

"It is she!" he cried, in a tone of conviction. "What can she mean by treating me this way? She must have recognized me; but, perhaps not. She may have thought me a stranger, and that I intended to insult her. I will follow her at once. Great heavens, what can have reduced her to this terrible extremity?"

Then, with hasty strides, he followed in the footsteps of the woman.

He overtook her on the corner of Broome street.

"Lena!" he cried, "do you not know me?"

Perceiving that he was determined to cost her, she halted.

"Yes, I do know you, Lucien Granger—know you to my sorrow," she replied, bitterly.

The young man stared in astonishment. He could not comprehend the meaning of this strange speech.

"Lena, are you out of your senses?" he asked, in amazement. "What is the meaning of this? I could hardly believe my ears when I heard the tones of your voice to-night. You singing for money in the streets of New York?"

"Yes, and you dared to offer me money?" cried the girl, indignantly. "I would rather starve than touch one penny that came from you."

"There is some grave misunderstanding here," said Lucien, who could not guess a reason for the strange words of the street singer. "But, this is no place to talk. Have you a home?"

"Yes, such as it is," answered the girl; "but the poor—the starving—can not be particular; they must take what they can get."

"Take me to your home then. There must be an understanding between us. I am willing to forgive the wrong that you have done me."

"I wrong you!" cried the girl, indignantly; "rather say the wrong that you have done me."

"Again I say, there is some strange misunderstanding here!" said Lucien. "All I ask is a few minutes of your time to explain my actions, which I can do, clearly and fully. I hope you may be able to do the same."

"I will give you the chance," said the girl, quickly. "Come with me and see the refuge to which your cruelty has driven your wife and child."

Without a word, Lucien followed the girl. She led the way to a tenement-house in Mott street—a house situated in the rear of another—access to it being had through a small and dirty alleyway.

To a small room on the very top of the house the girl led the young man.

She lit a candle. The infant she placed carefully on the wretched little bed that was made up on the bare floor.

The young man looked around upon the dirty wall, carpetless floor and scanty furniture with horror.

"This is your home?" he cried.

"Yes, the home which my love for you has given me," she answered, bitterly.

"You speak in riddles. Tell me how I have ever wronged you?"

"I will," she answered. "You came to Palatine Bridge, found me a happy girl, living with my parents. You won my love and made me your wife secretly, for you said you feared the anger of your wealthy father. You took me to Albany, left me there, while you went to New York to break the knowledge of your marriage to your father. You left me in charge of your friend, Charles Harding. Three days after you left me he said that you had written to him to bring me to New York; so I came with him. Here his conscience smote him, and he told me the truth—that my marriage was a false one, and that you had deserted me. Then he dared to offer me his protection. I spurned him; earned my bread by

my needle, for I did not dare to return to my father's house, a guilty thing. Then my baby was born. My health was poor. I could not sew, and I have sung in the street that it might live."

"Oh, Lena!" cried Lucien, impulsively. "we have both been the dupes of a villain. This man came to me and said that you had fled with a notorious blackleg from Albany. Struck to the heart by the blow—for I believed him—after a fruitless search for you, I went to Europe, hoping to find consolation in travel. I have just returned. Heaven has given you to my arms again. Lena do you believe me?"

With a cry of joy the girl threw herself into the arms of her husband.

After a long night of sorrow, the light had come.

Lucien's father in the interim had died, and he was free to act his own pleasure.

Few would recognize in the wife of the wealthy Lucien Granger, Lena, the Street Singer.

### The Doctor's Patient.

#### A STORY OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

Rap, rap, rap.

The summons roused the young doctor from his reverie, and he rose from the armchair. As he did so he glanced at the little clock that ticked away on the mantle, and the hour. It was half-past twelve—

I thought some one would come before morning," he murmured; "I hope the sufferer does not live far away, for I am tired almost to death. I thought the day would never end; but at last night came but to increase my toils. Oh, this is a terrible time for the poor Crescent City, and, as yet, the scourge does not abate."

As he spoke, he busied himself with donning the coat he had tossed upon his couch when he returned from his last visit.

Rap, rap, rap, again.

The case must be a critical one," he exclaimed, and a moment later he was flying down the stairs to the front door of the doctor's office.

He quickly threw it open, and confronted a little girl about nine years of age.

"Well, my child?"

"Be you Doctor Leslie?" she asked, trying

The touch of his fingers seemed to send a

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jumped to his feet, and dealt blows right and left.

But the robbers were not disposed to relinquish their prey. They saw that Paul had no weapons, and taking courage, they rushed upon him with their knives, pressing him hard. He fought desperately, and might have conquered eventually; but a fourth person appeared unexpectedly, and the click of his pistol sent the robbers off in a hurry.

"Upon my soul, you stoned them a good sight," said Charles Matthews. "Are you hurt?"

"Not in the least, thanks to you," said Paul. "I owe you my life."

"I am not so sure of that," said the banker, with a smile. "You would have whipped the curs, but not without some ugly cuts, perhaps; so I will take all the credit that is due. My name is Charles Matthews."

"Mine is Paul Rodney. I was on my way to Willhampton, and these rascals fell upon me while I was asleep."

"Willhampton is my home, Mr. Rodney. I have a carriage in the road, and why not make the rest of your journey with me?"

"With pleasure," said Paul, frankly.

"How far to Willhampton?" asked Paul, after they were seated in the carriage.

"But a few miles now. We shall be there in two hours or less."

"So near! I should have kept on."

"Then you really intended to make a night of it?" asked the banker, with an amused smile.

"I certainly should, Mr. Matthews, if I had not been disturbed."

"If I had been in your situation," said the banker, laughingly, "I should thank the prowling thieves for waking me, though I can not say that I particularly admire the mode!"

Paul laughed good-humoredly.

"I assure you, Mr. Matthews, that I never slept better. I have passed many a night in worse places."

"You must have seen something of the rough side of life, Mr. Rodney."

"More than I hope to again," said Paul, earnestly.

"If not painful to you, I shall be pleased to listen to an account of some of your adventures," said Mr. Matthews, quite charmed with the young man's manner.

Paul readily complied, giving a cursory sketch of his life, and taking no credit for acts of real heroism.

Mr. Matthews was interested.

"Thank you, Mr. Rodney. I have derived much pleasure. Your errand here reminds me that I have a story."

Thereupon the banker related the facts of Mrs. Morehouse's strange disappearance, and of the finding of Meta. Paul listened in wonder.

"There is an air of romance about this Meta that pleases me," said Paul.

"You are not alone, Mr. Rodney; and I predict more interest yet when you see her."

"Is she very beautiful?"

"Beyond compare," replied the banker, enthusiastically. "She is my pride and my pet. I never before saw a woman in whom were combined such beauty and grace. And she is accomplished, as well."

"You interest me more and more," said Paul, "but I must not lose sight of my duty. Has nothing been heard of the widow Morehouse?"

"Nothing whatever."

"Then my search is but just commenced," said Paul, wearily.

"On the contrary, I think it is ended for the present," said the banker. "It will be useless to attempt to find Mrs. Morehouse. There is a detective working at the case, but he has not yet determined, to a certainty, whether the lady was carried away, or wed to her own free will. If he, a man wed to the business, is puzzled, what can you hope?"

"Very true," said Paul, thoughtfully; "yet I feel that something ought to be done. Advise me, Mr. Matthews, for I need it."

"The proper course, as it seems to me," said Mr. Matthews, "is to place the money where it will draw interest, find some employment for yourself, and wait at least until the detective gives up the case or finds the lady. What think you?"

"I rely upon your judgment," replied Paul; "and I can see no better way to act."

"I am in the banking business," continued Mr. Matthews, "and I will take the money if you wish. I have already a small balance in Mrs. Morehouse's favor. And I will give you employment, Mr. Rodney. I shall have a vacancy at the bank next week."

"But I have no references, Mr. Matthews," said Paul, much surprised.

"I ask none but those you have already given me, Mr. Rodney. I feel sure that I shall not find my confidence misplaced."

"Thank you, Mr. Matthews," said Paul, with considerable feeling. "It has troubled me more than a little to know what I should find to do."

"Then we will consider that matter settled, Mr. Rodney. You will make my house your home while you are with me, which I hope will be a long time."

"I shall strive to do my duty in what-ever capacity I am placed," said Paul.

"I feel sure of it, Mr. Rodney. Here we are at home."

#### CHAPTER IX. A SCOWL-SHADOW.

relieving him of Mrs. Matthews, and boldly striking out for shore. "Follow me if you can! At all events keep the lady's head above water. I will return soon."

As is often the case, there was not a boat within reach, and the people collected on the shore were passive spectators. Paul, however, was equal to the task. He needed no help. His Herculean strength, united with a perfect knowledge of the art of swimming, took him safely to the beach with his helpless burden. Scarcely feeling the exertion, he was ready to plunge again.

George was struggling heroically, but he was too nearly exhausted to make any progress. Paul's welcome face again appeared, and soon he was on the return, with Meta in his care.

George, relieved of the dead weight, now kept up with Paul, and together they reached the land in safety.

Paul shook the sea-water from his hair, and, with a smile, took the other's outstretched hand.

"An unexpected bath, Mr. Matthews, but I really feel the better for it. How are the ladies?"

"As well as ever, thank you, Paul," said the banker's wife.

"Why, my dear madam, you were not one of them?" exclaimed Paul, surprised exceedingly. "I never even looked at your faces."

"I must say I like that," said Meta, who overheard his last remark. "Who ever heard of such a thing! It is too bad!"

"I shall never be guilty of such negligence again," said Paul, with an earnest look, and a smile that seemed to light up his whole being.

"See that you do not, sir," said Meta, gayly. Then, in a more serious tone, she said:

"I thank you, Mr. Rodney, for my life."

"And I thank God that I was placed near to be of service to you," said Paul, fervently.

George stood but a few steps from them, silent and moody. The shadow of Paul's presence was already falling about him.

Paul guessed something of his thoughts, and felt pain that he had been the cause.

"Come, George," said he, pleasantly, "the ladies are waiting to thank you for your bravery. Had it not been for your presence of mind, at the time of the mishap, I fear that we should not have been blessed with this happy termination."

"Yes, George," said his aunt; "we owe our safety equally to you and Mr. Rodney."

And Meta softened a little as she thanked him.

The carriage was waiting, and the party got in and were driven home.

#### CHAPTER X. THE HOUND OF FATE.

FLEEING through the night-solitude, fleeing from a danger that she knew not of, fleeing from a wily foe that should have been a dear friend, fleeing from the misery of a broken heart, Ella Martin kept on.

There was but one settled purpose in view: to escape the sight of Henry's perfidy, and her sister's treachery. There was no anger in her heart for either; only a devout, maddening grief that goaded her on, unmindful of results.

She scarcely thought of the wrong she was doing her father; but, as the soft night-air cooled her throbbing temples, she grew much calmer, and looked less excitedly upon the situation. She would have turned back then rather than bring sorrow upon her poor father, but she heard the deep baying of Dora's avenger tracking his prey.

"The bloodhound is on my trail!" she whispered, with white lips. "He will tear me in pieces! Oh, they might have spared me this! It is Dora—it is my sister! God pity her—and me!"

She was paralyzed with horror for a moment. Then she ran wildly on to escape the horrible death.

Beyond, through the trees, she could see the silver surface of the lake, lighted by the rays of the moon which was well up in the heavens.

"There is safety," she thought. "There is happiness—there is rest—eternal rest, if I can but reach it!"

The hound's deep baying was growing more and more distinct, spurring her to renewed exertion.

"Oh, mercy, I shall not escape!" she cried; "he is almost here!"

Yet she kept on.

The water was right before her—a haven of rest. A few short moments and she would be safe.

"Oh, my God! I hear the footsteps in the leaves!" she wailed, in despair. "He will overtake me! Oh, what a death! Oh, Henry! Oh, Dora! Oh, father! don't you hear me call?"

The hound saw Ella, and raising his head from the ground, he gave a yelp of satisfaction, and bounded toward her.

She heard him, and with a short prayer for mercy, she made one more effort to reach the water. There was but a step to the verge of the jutting rock—but a step into eternity. But even that was preferable to the fate behind her. How she shuddered at the thought of the growling and snarling, and the gnashing of teeth.

For a second she hesitated, ere she took

the death-leap; and, in that brief time, the sleuth-hound cleared the space between, and with a bound bore her to the ground.

#### CHAPTER XI. PLAYING WITH FIRE.

In the gray of the morning Dora saw her father and Henry Vinton returning from their search. She felt no qualms of conscience when she saw that Ella was not with them; in place of sorrow, she felt joy. The life that she should have cherished, she had offered upon the altar of her ambition.

She hastened down to meet them.

"Go tell her, Henry," said the despairing father. "Oh, my poor child!"

Henry rode up to where Dora was waiting for them, and alighted.

"We have not found her, Dora."

His tone was one of utter hopelessness, and Dora read it.

"Oh, Henry!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears, for they seemed always at command. "My darling sister! Where can she be? What did she mean? Oh, I never can forgive myself! yet I could not give you up, Henry."

During that night-ride, Henry Vinton had been reviewing his life for the few months just passed, and the record was unsatisfactory. He resolved that, whatever might come, he would no more perjure his soul by such conduct, unworthy of a man.

The loss of Ella opened his eyes to the fact that she was all in all to him, and Dora nothing. Dora, with all her beauty, couldn't fill the void in his heart. Her dazzling brilliancy might, for a time, obscure that true passion which he felt for Ella, but only for a brief space. This knowledge, showing him how culpable had been his actions, determined his true course.

"Dora," said he, looking down into her lustrous eyes with a steady gaze that told her the worst was coming, "I have wronged you and your sister, and this night's work has shown me the path that I must take to make the only reparation within my power. I have long loved your sister, but your beauty and your kindness to my father have sometimes led me from Ella's side to your own. Yet all the while I was at heart true to Ella. I never can return that love which you have confessed for me. Deeply as it may pain you to hear, and me to say it, yet believe that you will thank me for it."

Dora listened without once interrupting him, yet the words were like daggers to her heart. She loved Henry Vinton with all the ardor of her Southern nature, and would risk life, yes, even a hope of herself, for a pledge that her love was returned. But for all this, the loss of Arrancourt was tenfold worse. Ambition first, and love next.

His manner convinced her that no fair means would accomplish her ends, and she answered without any attempt at concealment:

"Henry Vinton, you taunt me with having confessed my love. I do not deny it, neither can I retreat. You may say that I am unwomanly, but remember that I have a man to battle against, and I must use the means that I have. I did love you, Henry. It grew upon me every day, and became a part of my being. I strove to win you, but strove too hard. Had I scorned you as you deserved, you would now be at my feet, begging for one word of love. But I could not; neither can I let you go."

"Dora, you know not what you say!" said Henry, alarmed at her vehemence, and troubled by the look with which she regarded him.

"I repeat," said she, slowly and firmly, "that I can not give you up. I shall hold you until death calls one of us away."

He stared in blank surprise, wondering if this could be the gentle, kind-hearted Dora of former times—this woman with flashing eyes, burning face and grating teeth. And he recited with a strange fear creeping over him.

"Dora, are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Have you lost your senses that you talk thus after what I have said?"

"I hold you if you hate me!" she replied, in a voice that sounded like the hissing of a serpent. "And you dare not attempt to break the bonds."

"Dare not, Dora?"

"Ay, dare not, Henry Vinton. You shall make me your wife!"

"Never!" said Henry, haughtily; for this woman was appearing in her true light, and her very beauty was becoming hateful. "Now I know that you are only seeking my father's wealth."

"And I will have it!" she replied, coldly.

"Dare you tell me this, Dora?"

"I dare any thing to attain my ends, Henry Vinton."

They stood facing each other, he with a look of loathing that he made no attempt to conceal, she with an eye flashing with triumph—hot, pitiless and cunning.

"Do you consent?" she asked, tapping the grass with her little foot.

"Never! never!"

"Then," said Dora, turning toward the house, "the word shall know what, happened beyond the seas; and the proud heir of Arrancourt shall hide his head in shame."

"Good God! you do not mean that?" exclaimed Henry, grasping her arm, while his body seemed shrinking with fear at the threat.

"I do mean it!" she replied, with a hollow, grating laugh, that went rasping through his brain painfully. "Only two things can close my mouth; death or marriage. The first you do not dare; the last, you must and shall do."

Henry staggered against the wall of the mansion.

"Mercy!" he gasped, she looked so much like a pitiless fiend.

"I know no such word," she said, coldly. "There are but two in my vocabulary—ambition and love. All others I have blotted out for the present."

"Dora, you will kill me with your cursed madness. I know not what secret you hold, but its shadow has hovered over me for years."

"Your death will affect me but little, Henry Vinton. Whenever you choose to go, do not hesitate on my account. You can not take the wealth with you."

"Fiend! Devil!" he exclaimed.

"Spare your insults, sir," she said, haughtily. "They do not move me."

"Will any thing move you? Gold?"

"The whole or none, Henry Vinton. You have my answer and further words are useless."

She turned to go into the house, but he placed himself in her way.

"Not yet," he said, determinedly. "I must know the ground I stand upon. I must know how soon you demand this sacrifice. You will give me time to prepare."

"Certainly. It would not be proper, so soon after my sister's death."

"Death? A murderer, too."

"No, Henry Vinton. I am free from that crime. You alone must bear the guilt of my sister's death. Your perfidy drove her away, a suicide."

## The Double Escape.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

FROM childhood Harvey Merrill had shown a fondness for adventure, which, as he grew older, developed into a strong desire for a sea life.

Physically, as well as by inclination, he was fitted for a sailor.

A little above the medium height, he was broad-shouldered, deep-chested, thin in the flanks, with strong, flexible limbs, which had often enabled him, during his boyish sports, to venture where few had dared to follow.

His father being a man of influence, finally procured him a midshipman's warrant aboard the sloop-of-war *Phenix*, of Boston, in which vessel, after performing two cruises, he returned to his native city, with the promise of promotion from the captain by whom he was much liked.

The youth was now nearly twenty years of age, although his brown cheek, well-developed figure and air made him seem a few years older. His neat uniform became him well, and as some young ladies are influenced by a man's attire and its effects, many who, in his younger days, had not noticed him particularly, now bestowed upon him those soft glances of interest, which, from time immemorial, have played such mischief with the masculine heart.

Harvey, however, while polite to them all, remained indifferent until there appeared among them a little brunette of seventeen with a round face and form, and soft, dark eyes, which she would turn up in a peculiarly tender way at him, from under her arched brows.

He fancied himself deeply in love with her. The consequences was that before he had sailed on his next voyage, each had "plighted faith"—swearing by the stars to remain true.

Harvey went to sea, believing himself the happiest of men, and not a little proud in the idea that, as much as Clara Morn (her name) had seen of society, he was the first man who had awakened the passion of love in that gentle heart.

In fact, the consciousness of this increased almost to conceit the self-esteem of this youth, who had hitherto been remarked for his modesty.

"She loves me so," he would think to himself, "that it would kill her were she to lose me."

The next moment, with a sob, she had darted off.

"She was right," thought Harvey; "poor Clara would die were I to marry another!"

He returned to the sloop, feeling that his hopes in this world were ruined forever.

A year later the *Phenix* anchored in Boston Harbor. Passing through the street, thinking to himself what a miserable man he was, and asking himself if it would be right for him to make poor Clara still believe he loved her, he saw a lady and gentleman moving along, arm-in-arm, on the other side of the way. The lady was Clara—and the gentleman, as he learned on reaching his father's, was—her husband!

He was a millionaire, and for that reason Clara had broken her faith with Harvey, who now breathed a deep sigh of relief, although it must be acknowledged that his self-esteem received a blow.

Christina's image remained in his heart. Two years later he went to Norway, and found her still single.

Poor child; her's was a different nature from Clara's. She could never take up with another, although tempting offers had been made her.

Meanwhile Oirof had gone away and been drowned at sea.

Harvey straightway made Christina happy by marrying her and taking her with him to America.

With one of her affectionate nature he was indeed blessed, and he never failed to thank heaven for his double escape, and his marriage with one in whom he can never cease to love.

Cruiser Crusoe:  
LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFOREST.

NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

My mind soon recovered its tone, when, as a relief from the confinement of the boat, I began paddling on the reef, picking up fish, and amusing myself with the gambols of my dog. But not for long, as a chill, which went to my bones, warned me of a change of wind and a coming storm.

"And so you do not care for Oirof?"

"I never told him I did. He wanted me, and you wanted me to have him. I thought it was all right, until I saw that other!"

To Oirof the father related this. The mate made no response, but his moodily brow boded no good.

Finally the sloop-of-war, which was bound for the Arctic, put into a bay, not far from the Lofoten Islands, for repairs. The homes of the Norwegian castaways were but a few miles from here, which was one reason why the sloop's captain had preferred going into this bay, instead of one further to the south.

Harvey's resolution to keep away from Christina told upon him. He grew pale and thin.

This was a bank.

One evening, at about dusk, he was wandering moodily along the sea-shore, within sight of her house—a little one-story house, with a red-tiled roof—when he was set upon by three men, one of whom he at once recognized as Oirof. They threw him down, and fastening him with ropes to the fragment of an old skiff, they set him adrift, with the current rushing along toward the dangerous Maelstrom.

"There!" screamed Oirof, "go to your fate, and leave me to win my bride!"

So saying, he vanished behind the rocks with his companions.

Meanwhile there was the current drawing Harvey nearer and nearer to the mad vortex. He could hear it more distinct every moment, could see the lightning-like flash of the white waters as they circled round and round in one great tremendous mass. His fate seemed inevitable: he would be dashed to pieces against the rocks of the storm before being drawn under!

A brief, silent prayer rose from his heart. His speed was now so great that his brain grew dizzy, and he could scarcely think. Nearer and nearer to the vortex. It was sounding the knell of his doom—he must perish!

"But who is that who now darts in a skiff from round the angle of a near rock?"

It is a woman! Even in that faint light he recognizes Christina!

She sweeps alongside of him. She helps him into the skiff.

What of that? Can she resist the fearful current?

She does so; one end of her skiff is by a net-rope attached to a spur of the rock round which she came. Upon this rope she pulls the boat to the rocky strand. Harvey is saved. The explanation was brief. Afloat in her father's fisher skiff, she had seen the young man set adrift by his enemies, and had thus been able to make ready for his rescue.

"Better you had let me go," said Harvey, sadly, and there and then he told her of the one to whom he had plighted faith. The tall, queenly figure drooped like a lily; the whole frame trembling showed how deep was the girl's suffering.

She took him ashore, within reach of his sloop which was to sail the next morning.

"Go!" she said. "You must keep your word with the American girl!"

The next moment, with a sob, she had darted off.

"She was right," thought Harvey; "poor Clara would die were I to marry another!"

He returned to the sloop, feeling that his hopes in this world were ruined forever.

A year later the *Phenix* anchored in Boston Harbor. Passing through the street, thinking to himself what a miserable man he was, and asking himself if it would be right for him to make poor Clara still believe he loved her, he saw a lady and gentleman moving along, arm-in-arm, on the other side of the way. The lady was Clara—and the gentleman, as he learned on reaching his father's, was—her husband!

He was a millionaire, and for that reason Clara had broken her faith with Harvey, who now breathed a deep sigh of relief, although it must be acknowledged that his self-esteem received a blow.

During the furious tempest, I had emptied the keg, while the gourds and calabashes had cracked, and split every drop of liquid.

There remained nothing whatever to do, but to subsist upon the contents of the cocoanuts, until I could make land. But then the fearful conviction came like a flash of lightning to my mind, that not a speck of land was in sight, nothing but that fearful sky and water, and that awful sun peering down upon me like a huge eye of fire, and scorching me to the very bones.

My first task was to step my mast, and then hoist my sail in such a way as to give me some shelter. This certainly was an improvement, but no one out of the tropics can conceive the intensity of the heat which is experienced in those latitudes, with the sun above your head and not a breath of wind or water.

At twelve o'clock, the boat cast no shadow on the waters. The sun was vertical above, plunging its torrid rays fiercely, awfully below.

With nothing to quench my thirst, but the contents of the cocoanuts, it became necessary to lean over in the boat and bathe my hands and face, than which no better way can be conceived of checking the thirst in its earlier stages. But with my sailor-boy education, imagine the shock which went to my heart when I saw, close to the canoe, a large bottle-nosed shark steadily swimming round the boat, attended by one or two pilot-fish.

Then I made up my mind that I was about to die, and that these awful scavengers of the deep knew it. There is always a slight delirium attendant on thirst, so that the mind is unusually affected. Be this as it may, I leaned back in my boat, and then caught the eye of my dog; he was looking at me with a fixed and earnest glance. His paws were stretched out, his mouth open, his eyes red, fixed and staring, while he panted horribly from the excessive heat, and from intensity of thirst.

My God! there could be no doubt about it, the creature was going mad.

I felt sick unto death, but searching in my belt for a knife, determined to make some defense. To be hit by the poor canine friend that had stuck to me so long, was a

second horizon, so black, clear and defined was it.

This was a bank.

When the angry wind pours its fury on the placid waters, before it lashes itself up to a full conviction of its own power and vastness, and sends the waves towering and toppling mountains high, it raises as it goes a dark fore-running wave, that hisses and rolls like the surf on a sandy shore, changing the mirror-like surface of the water to bubbles and billows.

Seizing hold of the rudder, I turned the boat round, stern to the wind, as, had the storm taken her on her broadside, she must have capsized. The next minute I was riding on the boiling, seething, crackling, hissing and tearing waves, my whole energy being devoted to keeping the canoe straight before the wind.

It was no easy task, for as we flew—the billows from behind increasing in size and force every instant—it was with difficulty I prevented my canoe from being pooped, which was the danger, which, in the first part of this strange and eventful history, was described as being incident to running before the wind.

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It was no easy task, for as we flew—the billows from behind increasing in size and force every instant—it was with difficulty I prevented my canoe from being pooped, which was the danger, which, in the first part of this strange and eventful history, was described as being incident to running before the wind.

It was no

haughty than himself, had been an invalid for years, and he had emigrated to Florida from Virginia expecting the climate of the peninsular State to restore her to wonted health and strength. "The Colonel," as he was called, was childless; but, Ida Clafin, an orphan and his niece, supplied a daughter's place.

With this perhaps necessary digression, let us resume the thread of our story.

The last word had scarcely left Ida's lips, when Wicochee replied:

"Wicochee has something to say to the colonel's niece. But he will not say it here. Yonder," and he pointed to a forest which bordered the eastern edge of the savanna, "is a spot where Wicochee will speak."

"Where?" inquired the girl, who did not fully understand the chief.

"In the wood, by the spring."

Ida knew the designated spot.

"Why can you not speak here? Wicochee?" she asked, fearing that something evil lurked at the bottom of the chief's intentions.

"Because a Seminole might see us," was the strange reply—strange to Ida, who, as yet, knew nothing about the unearthly hatchet. "White Bird need not fear to enter the forest with Wicochee, for no harm shall come to her. By the Great Spirit the Seminole swears it."

Then Ida thought that the Indian had a truly important communication to deliver, and she told him that she would hesitate no longer.

Wicochee smiled and assisted the two girls to mount one of the horses. Then he mounted the other himself, and rapidly they galloped across the savanna toward the timber.

Presently they entered it, when their horses' gait dwindled into a walk. In a short time a shallow stream was crossed, and the trio alighted at the foot of a majestic tree. The animals were allowed to stand in the water and quench their thirst.

"Now, Wicochee, we are at the spring. Please tell me why I was summoned into your presence?"

"Wicochee will speak now," said the chief, after looking scrutinizingly around. "The Seminoles have unearthed the hatchet, and to-night inaugurate a bloody war."

The maiden's cheeks slightly paled, for she thought of her own and her relatives' helpless condition.

"Yes, a bloody war is at hand," reiterated the chief, wishing to fasten the declaration upon the mind of his startled auditor. "The first blow is to be struck to-night, and the lodge among the golden-fruited trees must feed the flames."

The terrified maiden looked into the Seminole's face, and then, as if suddenly comprehending the meaning of his words, uttered a shriek and fell senseless at his feet.

In a moment Wanane was at Ida's side, and she held the poor girl's hands while Wicochee bathed her face with clear, cold water, which bubbled musically from a spring at the foot of the tree.

Presently she recovered, and Wanane assisted her to a sitting position. She did not speak, but, with bowed head, thought of the terrible blow that had sent her to the earth.

"Will not White Bird have a drink?" asked Wicochee, filling a rude wooden cup with water from the spring.

His voice recalled Ida from the past to the present, and, turning, she cast herself at his feet.

"Oh, Wicochee," she pleaded, "let not the blow fall upon them! I know that it is in your power to save them, and oh! will you not do it?"

A shade of sadness crossed Wicochee's face, and he looked pityingly upon the pleading girl.

"Wicochee can not save all," he said, "for if he did, he could not strike the white aggressors. His tribe would slay him, and they need his arm in the coming war. But Wicochee can save one of the colonel's family, and that one is before him."

Ida buried her face in her hands, and wept undisturbed over the coming fate of her relatives. Wicochee and Wanane looked on without exchanging a word.

When the grief-stricken girl raised her head, Wicochee touched her arm.

"There is a place in this wood where White Bird can live till her lover comes," he said. "Wicochee discovered it when he was hunting, a long time ago. There Wanane can visit White Bird and cheer her. Let us go to the hiding-place."

The chief rose and caught the horses. He led them from the stream, and again assisted the girls to mount. Poor Ida scarcely realized that she was being borne away; her brain was in a whirl, and she thought only of her relatives.

At last Wicochee drew rein at the base of a large mound in the center of the forest. Its sides were covered with a growth of underwood, and fallen trees. He led Ida toward the summit, and Wanane followed. Suddenly they stood before the dark mouth of an opening leading into the mound. They were compelled to stoop to enter, and after descending a dozen artificial steps, they paused in a large apartment whose somberness was relieved by a torch. The natural floor was covered with skins, and the walls were beautifully decorated with the feathers of king vultures and other birds of gorgeous plumage.

"Wicochee made the steps," said the Indian, and the skins and feathers in their present places. This is White Bird's home till her lover comes. He may be here to-morrow."

Ida looked at the Seminole, lost in amazement. How did he know that Rodney Ellington was expected at the plantation?

"Wicochee." Just then the torch fell to the ground and was extinguished.

When Wanane rejoiced it, Wicochee was gone!

It was the night succeeding the day freighted with the events related above.

A young man stood in the soft moonlight, and gazed upon the still smoking ruins of Arnol Greycliffe's property.

He knew that the Seminoles had been there, and that the deeds which had been enacted, inaugurated a war.

Suddenly he started and looked wildly around, for some person had spoken his name—Rodney Ellington.

But not a human form met his gaze, and the almost palpable silence that followed was broken by the same voice:

"Rodney Ellington, the hatchet has been unearthed."

He turned toward the sound, and beheld a tall, inimical savage gazing at him. The red skin seemed to have risen from the ground.

The young man recognized him and stepped to his side. The Seminole extended his

hand, but Rodney drew back and pointed to the work of the red demons.

"She is not among them," spoke the Indian. "Wicochee would have saved all; but he could save only one."

Then Ellington grasped the chief's brown hand.

"Rodney Ellington, you saved Wicochee from the jaws of the alligator, and Wicochee has saved the White Bird."

"Where is she?"

"Come."

They left the desolate spot, and near the dews of day reached the mound.

Within it the lover clasped Ida to his bosom, and kissed her pale cheek.

She was saved. Wicochee had become a traitor to a debt of gratitude. The next day he guided the lovers to a spot within sight of Fort King, where he left them.

They entered the fort in which Ida resided till the close of the Seminole war.

Throughout the conflict Rodney Ellington and Wicochee fought bravely, but on opposite sides. They never met on the field of battle, nor after the war closed.

The heroine of our story is now the much respected wife of Rodney Ellington, the retired banker; and she often relates to her grandchildren the strange story of Wicochee, the Seminole, who sleeps in the land he loved. Linda Florida, the land of flowers.

### Camp-Fire Yarns.

#### Old Joe Logstone and the Grizzly.

"Missed him, by all that's wonderful!" I chattered, as the deer bounded off in the chapparel, and old Joe Logstone slowly lowered his rifle from his face with a look of extreme mortification.

"No, lad," replied the old hunter; "not edzackly missed the creature, but it ar' just as bad, fer I ought to a' thrown him in his tracks."

"Then buck ar' got my ball, ye kin don't on't, an' ar' won't travel fur; but, ah's a-me! hyar's what's the matter, boyee!" and Joe laid his left hand upon the elbow of the right arm.

"Why, how is that, Joe?" I asked, suspecting that there was an adventure connected therewith. In fact I knew there was, having heard other trappers tell of how the hunter had nearly lost his arm in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter with a grizzly.

"Well, lad, the story ar' a short one, but

it war too late now to whine over what war already did, an' so I sat about doin' the next best thing, an' that war to drop one uv the imps right plumb in his tracks."

The shot made the balanced take cover, an' I see'd a openin' fer a rush, an' ye kin bet I made it. After they knew'd what war up I war through 'em, an' pulin' out like a scart goat up the side uv the mountain.

"The race war a long an' a hard one, boyee; an' I seed by'mby that the Injins war a-goin' to, outwind me, an' so I began lookin' around fer a place to cache. I could hear the imps on my trail, but that warn't none uv 'em in sight."

"It warn't long 'fore I spied the place I war in search ny, a smart chance uv a cave in the cliff, an' into it I went head fast, nearly buttin' my brains out ag'in a cussed rock that hung down from the top. The next minnit I heard the varmints yellin' outside, an' thought that they hed treed me, but they hedn't, an' purty soon that screeches war lost in the distance as they kept on along the side uv the mount'in, followin' my trail—ha! ha!"

"But, lad," and the old hunter made a grimace, "it war nip an' tuck, as it turned out, whether it wouldn't be better to let him face the Utes an' fit it out in the open daylight, an' with plenty uv fresh a're."

"I know'd the imps'd soon find out that mistake an' put back on that own trail, an' so I perched on a kind uv y'ge uv a' diskivry back into the hole. As I sed, it war a right smart chance uv a place, an' I reckin' mebbe I went as fur as a hundred or more yards back ards afore I war brought up all standin' by the darnedest savagest growl that ever I heard in more'n thirty years in the mount'in an' an' peraries."

I know'd it in a minnit. I hed heard Ole Eph talk too often not to be sartin it war him, an' I tell ye, boyee, my heart jest stopped cluck off, an' I felt that shaky in the knees that I hed to lean up ag'in the side uv the cave to keep on my pins at all.

"It ain't no joke, lad, to meet a grizzly on the open perairs with a rifle in yer hands, an' plenty uv daylight to look through the sights. But, fer tackle one uv 'em in a narrer cave, what ar' ar' as dark as a stack uv black cats in a cellar 'thout a winder, ar' a ser'ous matter, an' no mistake!"

"Wagh! it makes me sick at the stummic ter think uv that tussel."

"It warn't long comin', ole Eph, warn't ar' the way he did kin at me war with a rush an' a growl that made the very rocks shake. Ye see the ole cuss hed been asleep fer two or three weeks, or mobe more, an' purty lively, so I made travel fur him at

one day I started fur a crick that was chuck full o' trout, fine speckle-backs, weighin' in gen'ral nev'n four pound, an' I only tuk my old rifle in 'dition to my fishin'-rod an' gear, for I didn't want to be hampered, as the distance to the crick was considerable, an' the weather almighty hot. Wal, the day was purty fur gone when I reached the stream, an' by the time I'd ketched 'bout half-a-dozen brace, night was comin' on purty lively, so I made travel fur him at

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